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hyogo times



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All JETs in Hyogo are encouraged to send in articles, musings, poetry, prose and any ideas to improve the Hyogo Times for the betterment of the Hyogo JET community.

Submit by the 15th of each month to:
publications@hyogo.ajet.net

Visit us online!

Message from the Editor

Howdy howdy howdy,

Well the frost is finally upon us as we prepare our houses and our hearts for winter, the equal and opposite in almost every way of its other extreme brother, summer. You'll be reminded again as December deepens that you can't really keep anything out of your house, not stinkbugs, not spiders, and certainly not the cold. What do you want, with walls made of paper?

On the plus side, your fridge space will multiply out of control as your entire kitchen becomes a walk-in!

As you hunker down and prepare for the winter (and winter holidays) at your kotatsu (or off in Thailand), keep us in mind and let us know how your travels and travails go! We'd love to run tips on staying warm for the January issue (when things get cold for real), or stories of places afar!

For now, please enjoy the December issue of *Hyogo Times*!

Yours,

Lemmon



WRITE FOR TOHOKU.....

The *Write for Tohoku* e-book, a collection of nonfiction short stories about Japan, is now published and ready for purchase! All proceeds go to Japan Red Cross. Alon Adika, a Kobe JET alum (2006-2009) is among the JETs and JET alumni included in the work. Go to <http://fortohoku.org> to download a copy!

Message from the PR

Hello Hyogoers!

The holidays are upon us – finally! – which means I have to turn into your mother for a wee bit. If you're traveling out of the country for the holidays, please don't forget to register with your embassy (which can easily be done online), and let your family, friends, go-betweens, supervisors and PAs know that you'll be out and about. Don't forget the necessary visas and vaccinations, and please stay safe. Okay, mom moment over; now I can get back to trying to sound cool.

If you aren't jet-setting anywhere this month, there are lots of things going on in the neighbourhood to keep you occupied: the biggest and most popular would be *Kobe Luminarie* (December 1 – 12) and if your inner Kevin McAllister is crying out for attention, hop a train to Universal Studios Japan and bask in the warm glow of the giant Christmas tree – this year is USJ's 10th anniversary, so you KNOW they're going to party hearty! Word of caution: beware the slow-walking couples. ^_^

Christmas might bring a wave of awkward silence to your town, but お正月 (shogatsu/ Japanese New Year) will change all that! Do not feel obligated to eat your toshikoshi *soba* and *ozoni* all alone! People will be flocking to shrines and temples all over for the ringing of the gong. If you're nice you can always make puppy eyes at your friends and neighbours and beg them to take you along.



Let's face it: you're not going to finish all that sake by yourself... unless, that's your thing, in which case I better back away before I have another mom moment.

クリスマスおめでとう, merry/happy Christmas, happy Hannukah, merry Kwanzaa, Ramadan Mubarak, よいお年を from all of us at Hyogo AJET!

Wishing you happy holidays,

Sifton

Letter from the Online Editor

Dear Hyogo,

Welcome to the end of 2011! How was your year? What did you get accomplished? Do you still remember your New Year's resolution??!

I'm happy to report that the **Hyogo Times** site is strong as ever. Our readership isn't increasing exponentially, but ever since we started last February there's been a definite upward trend. Actually, we got our first "big break" (if you want to call it that) when a Japanese blog featured an article on our site, and 10,000 people visited in a single day! That increased our hit counter by 30%, instantly (in case you're wondering, it was the Travel Japan for Gero Onsen).

Of course the point of Hyogo Times online isn't to increase a hit counter, but to give ALTs in Hyogo a point source for useful and interesting resources and articles. I hope everyone uses the site on a regular basis and knows what it has – teaching help, travel advice, recipes, a classifieds system, a photo gallery, events calendar, updates from AJET, and plenty of reading

material for an afternoon without classes.

I'd like to wish everyone a safe trip home or wherever else this winter break. And there's nothing to be ashamed of if you're staying in Japan over New Years!!

Happy holidays,

Jonathan



Useful information

HYOGO PAs

078-362-3026

Mail: hyogo_pa@yahoo.com

URL: www.hyogoajet.net/wiki/Living_Guide

JETLINE

03-5213-1729

Call the JETLINE and talk to a CLAIR Programme Coordinator about anything you like. We are former JETs, and can answer most questions regarding the programme, and will try to help with any issues or questions you have regarding the workplace, or life in Japan. Hours are Monday – Friday, 9am – 6pm Japan Standard Time.

AJET PSG

050-5534-5566

Need to talk? Call the AJET Peer Support Group, a free, anonymous listening and referral service for JETs by JETs, every night of the year from 8pm – 7am.

TELL (Tokyo English Life Line)

03-5774-0992

Call the Life Line for free, anonymous, and confidential telephone counseling from 9am to 11pm, 365 days a year. Trained volunteers can offer counseling and support, as well as information on a broad range of English-speaking services in Japan.



Travel Japan!

Thanksgiving

On Saturday, November

26th, ten Americans and one Australian gathered at ten am to begin what has become a Shiso tradition.

These self-proclaimed middle-of-nowhere JETs (and friends) have imported a piece of culture in a truly tangible, and dare I brag it, delicious way.

Shiso, while relatively spread out and small, boasts a JET population of ten, with its 8 JHS (every JHS, even the one with only 41 students, has its own ALT) and two HS positions. And while we all attempt to teach the non-Japanese holidays to our students (Halloween! Christmas!), beginning in 2008, the Shiso JETs went it one better: they made a Thanksgiving feast for their “Shiso family.”

It began simply with the earnest desire to share Thanksgiving dinner with a few friends of

the Shiso ALT population. 2008’s JETs asked their BOE to recommend a place with a kitchen big enough to accommodate this, then ordered a turkey from the meat guy website, cooked together, and split the costs amongst them all; the first Shiso Thanksgiving was thus held. Miriam Truppin-Brown says, “that first year it was more like just us, just dinner and a few friends... we really wanted to do something to celebrate the holiday. It was the first Thanksgiving away from home for most of us. Even that early on, we were very connected as a community, so it as pretty natural that we decided to do this.”

This November’s feast featured a saliva-inducing eclectic mix of traditional and not-so-traditional fare, from turkey and stuffing, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, roast

veggies, cornbread, and pies galore, to spring rolls and fudge with Irish liqueur. The ALTs are encouraged to bring their favorite recipes, often from their own Thanksgiving experiences, so we get a lot of parental or grandparental influence. We’re bringing not only American culture to Shiso, we’re bringing our own personal culture as well. I made four pans of my mom’s sweet potato soufflé, because last year’s two pans were empty way too fast.

Many people in Japan have never even seen a turkey, let alone consumed one, but the lucky people invited to Shiso Thanksgiving have tasted this and more. I think turkey is one of the American foods that the Japanese know too little; for all the turkey sandwiches and ground turkey substitutions I ate throughout my life, this beast of a bird is way more “American food” to me than the classic Japanese image

of hamburgers. Yes, we have McDonald’s, but would you like some squash and corn with that?

Of course, the reason that Japanese people don’t eat much turkey is that it’s not easy to come by. The birds are in zoos, or aren’t at all, so you have to order your turkeys online, or make a trip to Costco. But if you’re cooking for 60, and we are this year, a trip to Costco isn’t such a bad idea after all.

Then we load up the cars, fill up our rented kitchen at the Gakuyukan, fill the turkeys with veggies, and the ovens with turkeys, and spend all day chopping, stirring, sautéing, taste-testing, and coping with measurement conversion. At six, the guests arrive and I attempt in my bumbling Japanese in my overwhelmed state to explain why we do this, what it’s all about.

Is Thanksgiving about “the Pilgrims and the Indians,” and what parallel can be drawn there between us ALTs and our Japanese community that keeps us from starving or freezing? Is this because we live in tiny apartments and can’t really invite out JTEs over for dinner even if we could cook? Is this because we need

to do something to remember that even out here in a country that doesn’t celebrate our holidays, we are still Americans and can still spend a day cooking with our families, feeding our friends?

Traditions of housecleaning and doing the dishes for my mother have morphed into the assumption that we need to plan the Costco trip (after Kobe Conference? the weekend of the 18th?), track down ingredients not native to Japan, book rooms at the city Gakuyukan, and get ahold of a bunch of casserole dishes and pie pans.

Starting in 2009, Shiso Thanksgiving has become a reasonably large event, costing more and requiring more from the planning and food-obtaining resources of the Shiso JETs. Since 2009, we’ve asked for donations from attending Japanese friends to help cover the costs of room rental and ingredients. It has been suggested more than once and from more than one source that for a meal such as we are providing it would not be unreasonable to “charge” 1000 yen, but we’ve resisted that, as we’re not running a restaurant, and that’s not really in our spirit of Thanksgiving. We still just

save receipts, add it up, and split the costs over all the ALTs.

Thanksgiving never goes off without a hitch, but over the years we’ve learned a few things, about cooking, about troubleshooting, and about little life lessons. I can personally attest to the fact that it’s fine to take out your frustration while mashing potatoes, but never while peeling them. We’re also reminded to be grateful for all the people in Shiso who fill our lives (and our gakuyukan invite lists), and all the food and warmth we concoct together.

At the end of the day, it’s cost us all about 50 bucks and tons of energy and time, but we can only hope that our decorations and explanations have taught someone something. If nothing else, at least they’ve tried turkey now.

Emily Lemmon

Hehe...

Life After the B.O.E.....

By David Namisato



Christmas Eve in Japan

David Namisato is an illustrator in Toronto, Canada, and a former CIR (Aomori-ken, 2002-04).

David's recent projects include children's picture book, *Fly Catcher Boy* written by Rebecca Kool and published by Gumboot Books, *Gabe and Allie in Race Through*

Time, a time travelling Canadian history comic appearing in *Kayak: Canada's History Magazine for Kids*, illustrating Archie characters for trading card company 5finity Productions, and of course the monthly *Life After the B.O.E.* comic.

www.lifeaftertheboe.com

洒落

Paul Schuble's

I-word play

楽器が
得意なトラ
ってなん
でしょうか？

Answer: オーケストラ (orchestra)
or トランペット (trumpet)

The riddle asks, "What tiger is skilled with a musical instrument?" One possible answer オーケストラ.トラ means tiger, so in Japanese "tiger" is part of the word orchestra. Another one is トランペット (trumpet), which also contains the word for tiger.

Travel Japan!

Sapporo
Yuki Matsuri.....

Sapporo Yuki Matsuri

It's about that time, eh folks!

Feb 6th to 12th is Sapporo's Snow Festival or Yuki Matsuri! We've all heard about it: amazing snow sculptures that tower over the crowds as the snow falls all around... it's pretty impressive and a little magical. I hear what you are saying... "It's such a long way to go!". Well, yes it is, so why not add on a side trip of skiing or boarding at the (in)famous Niseko? The powder is world-class, and the nightlife is pretty unique! If you go for the package option, things can get quite expensive, so, here are some tips to get you there without breaking the bank!

I know that I've said it like a million times, but for us here in beautiful Hyogo, SKYMARK is our friend. If you're on the ball, you should be able to snag some cheap

tickets. Just remember you must be online at 9:30am on the same date two months before you wish to fly.

The best of the Sapporo Festival's snow sculptures can be found in Odori Park. Massive works of art carved of glittering snow, you'll find many of your fave Anime characters (at least 5 of 'Chopper'), and others with a more international flavour. Whilst along the streets of Odori Park to check out the main event, you may even witness the ski jump competition. Most of the Ice Sculptures can be seen in the 'entertainment district' of Susukino, which when lit at night are very beautiful, while Tsudome has snow slides and mazes to race around. For more details on this year's events (and how they make these

amazing structures) head to www.snowfes.com/english/index.html.

Something that should not be missed whilst in Sapporo is the Sapporo Beer Factory Restaurant's Genghis Khan all you can eat and drink. Seasoned with the marinade provided or just with salt and pepper... Lamb heaven! This will set you back 3770 yen for a 100 minute feast. Oh, and the beer! The stout is just what you need to warm those cold bones. And if you're looking for chocolate, I recommend Royce's Almond Chocolate bar... bliss!

While the cheapest option by far is to stay with a friend, some other cheap options include *Tiara Hotel Susukino* from ¥2,250 per person, twin share; my favourite (purely

for the name) *Swanky Hotel* also from ¥2,250 per person, twin share; and the slightly more expensive end of the scale *Susukino Green Hotel II* for ¥6,800 per person, twin share (they also have triple, and Japanese style rooms). I think it's a pretty safe assumption to make that you'll want to stay in Susukino, as all the restaurants, shops, nightlife, and one of the main arenas for the Snow festival are right here at your doorstep.

So, seen all the sights in Sapporo? It's now time to head out for the powder! The easiest way to make it to Niseko from Sapporo is the 'White Liner'. Cheap, comfortable, and no need to worry about pesky train transfers, The White Liner allows you the luxury of laying back and falling asleep, or taking in the sights and snow, which sparkles in the sun. Their definition of 'return ticket' is fairly loose. I went from the airport to Niseko to Sapporo JR station with no troubles at all. Book on the internet 3 days prior to departure and you'll only pay

¥3,680 return (Niseko Service), ¥2,070 one way. They also have services to Hiroro, Furano, and Tomamu so take a peek! www.goodsports.co.jp/white_eng/ski-bus

Niseko itself is very easy to get around as the streets are arranged in a grid system. The roadsides are piled high with piles and piles of snow, and roads themselves can be icy; pedestrians beware. For skiers and boarders, a free shuttle service runs around the town every 15-20 minutes. There is a stop just a thirty minute walk from a quaint little 'pension' called Niseko Yubokumin (Niseko Nomad). It is run by a lovely Japanese couple, who went out of their way to make my trip a success. They have a range of ski gear available for higher at ridiculously cheap rates; another great reason to stay here. Book Kuni's son for a ski lesson at only ¥2,000 per hour (Japanese only), and for lower end gear I hired boots, skis and stocks for ¥1,000 per day. You can also take advantage of the Japanese dinner and breakfast served in the common room for a small fee. The rooms

themselves are very simple, with futons, blankets and homemade bunks, but comfortable enough for the purpose of sleep. They have stopped using Jalan for bookings, but the base rate is ¥3,500 per bed, so check out their website and send through an email! www.niseko-web.com/yubokumin/frame.htm

Lift passes are pretty expensive, I'm not going to lie, but I think it's well worth the expense here. Niseko has high quality powder with frequent snow fall, so you're in for a treat! Being a very low level skier myself, I chose the 'Hirafu Mountain Pass', this will give you access to the Niseko Grand Hirafu and Niseko Hanazono lifts. The price this season is ¥8,600. The 'All Mountain Pass' will give you access to, as one would expect, all the lifts on the Mountain, so you can go all the way to the top and down the Annipuri and Niseko Village runs, but be careful not to miss the last lift back over the mountain. A two day pass will set you back ¥10,700 this season.



...continued

There are many food choices around the town. On the lower end of the scale, Niseko Pizza has all your greasy needs covered, but if you want something a little more posh, I'd recommend trying the Salmon & Nori Roulades at The Vale Bar & Grill. After dinner, head out to the 'Ice Bar'. When I visited last year, the creator, builder and artist had just finished the entrance and exit to a new chamber, which was yet to be connected to the main room. Another unique bar is the 'Fridge'. The door is literally a fridge door, but inside is a spacious bar with a great atmosphere.

There is nothing better to finish off a day in the ski fields

than a nice Onsen. My picks are Popolo with its amazing view of Mt Yotei from both the inside and outside baths; it also has the best price on massage I had seen around the town. And Niseko Alpen Hotel, although it does not have the amazing view that Popolo has, does have a beautiful small wooden outdoor bath that faced away from the wind, overlooking, but obscured from the family run, and a real jet bath (fantastic for those poor overworked muscles!).

So, I urge all of you who have been thinking about it to grab some friends and take a peek. It's really something special, especially for those of us who



don't have regular (or any) snowfall back home. The only challenge is taking photos that do it justice.

Jess Grigg



SHISO PRETTY

Hey there Hyogoites!

My name is Miriam, and I was an ALT in Shiso City from 2008 to 2011. I want to introduce you to a new project by a group of Hyogo JET alumni!

shisopretty, launched last month, is the brainchild of a group of former ALTs who met while working together in the middle of nowhere, Hyogo. Driven by a love of fashion, and a fervent desire to stay in touch after we all left JET and went our separate ways, we created *shisopretty*, a daily fashion and lifestyle blog.

We have a registered beautician to give tips on hair and makeup; an expert in vintage bargain hunting and flea market couture; a shopaholic fashionista bringing you all the hottest tips on insider deals; musings on accessories, DIY and designer looks; how to throw together an awesome outfit in 5 minutes (and on a budget!); commentary on Japanese fashion (a la me, now living in Kyoto); even

some of our favorite recipes, and much more!

Check it out at www.shisopretty.com!

The story of *shisopretty*

Like most new JETs, when I got my placement in the summer of 2008, I reached for my computer to google my new town, and found... nothing. As far as Wikipedia was concerned, my town did not exist. I left for Japan fully expecting to pass a quiet, isolated year cut off from civilization, and especially other foreigners.

To my surprise, far from being lonely and isolated, I found a fabulous group of friends who became my family, my English enclave when I needed a break from living in Japan. I'm sure every rural JET can relate. I'm sure even city JETs can relate. The bonds you form with other JETs are like the bonds between survivors of a shipwreck. You become compatriots, afloat on a life raft amid a sea of rice paddies.

In that spirit, we launched the *shisopretty* blog, not only as a fun way to discuss fashion trends and lifestyle tips, but also as a testament of sorts to the amazing friendships we built while on JET.

Please take a minute to check out our blog! Even if it's not exactly your cup of tea, if you know someone who might be interested, pass the word along!

Questions? Comments? Suggestions? Hit us up at shisopretty@gmail.com!

Hyogo JETs in Cambodia

Cambodia: famous for its

natural beauty and cuisine, but infamous for the atrocities of its past and the current levels of aid required to help in recovery. Landmines, and other unexploded ordinances are littered throughout the country; the shadow of the Khmer Rouge rule from the late 1980's to the early 1990's still lingers in the background. Now, Cambodia is in development mode, with many local villages and towns still dependent on international financial and human aid.

What do you know about Cambodia? Besides being a warm country in Southeast Asia, the home of the famous Angkor Wat temples, and a country with a history of massive killings that went on during the infamous reign Khmer Rouge, it's also home to a great NGO called PEPY.

'PEPY' (*Promoting Education, emPowering Youth*), is a charitable organisation that is dedicated to increasing the capacity of the local populations to further develop their own communities. Working alongside organisations and local government structures, the focus is on the education and empowerment of youth. This isn't a specific 'teach English' charity, but one that seeks to re-affirm the national identity and culture of Cambodia.

The NGO, PEPY Cambodia, is partnered to a tourism branch called PEPY Tours. This is also a leading organization in the way of Responsible Tourism. Responsible tourism is a form of tourism that minimizes environmental and social impacts and tries to improve the overall economic and educational condition of residents. It also aims at educating tourists and provides meaningful connections with

local people. Instead of staying in hotels, we'll be staying with people, and instead of cars, we'll be riding bicycles on one of PEPY's bicycle tours.

PEPY's tours guide visitors through not only the Siem Reap region, home to the amazing Angkor Wat temples and beautiful villages, but also to large minefields remaining from the civil wars. It is worth mentioning that whilst most of the minefields have been cleared, there are areas that remain dangerous with mines and other forms of ammunition. PEPY's guided tours seek to raise awareness of the situation faced by local villages and communities as they look to live life as best they can.

Our group is made up of JETs from all over Hyogo-ken: Emily, Kameron, Miriam, Nohea (from the USA), Katie (Canada) and myself (New Zealand) and

will be lucky enough to spend a large part of our Christmas and New Year holidays touring, volunteering, and giving financial and human aid in one of those areas.

Our trip will be a six day ride beginning in the Siem Reap area. We will be doing most of the tour by bicycle, allowing us to well and truly see Cambodia up close. Highlights will include Angkor Wat and the surrounding temples, Khmer architecture, dedicated landmine museums, and participate in a home-stay with rural families in Cambodia. Our itinerary sees us take in the natural beauty of the country side, famous temples and ruins and generally gain an appreciation for Cambodia and her people. Equally, if not more importantly, we also get to see firsthand where the fundraised money goes. Visits to village schools, community halls, families, and businesses allow us to comprehend what PEPY does for and how they help in Cambodia.

The costs associated with the trip are in two parts. The tour itself (food, accommodation, bicycles, guides and so-on) is taken care of by us participants,

but the second part is the fundraising, financial part. The money raised goes directly to PEPY Cambodia's programs in education and clean water efforts. The idea behind fundraising is both that tourists leave behind money that continues to do good after they have returned home, and also that the process itself of raising the money thus broadens awareness in the home country of the traveller to Cambodia. We Hyogo-based Cambodia-bound JETs have already begun fundraising in our respective parts of Hyogo, with eikaiwa classes, clothing sales, music concerts, Thanksgiving dinners, and even getting in on the world famous 'Movember' events. Several group members also took part in the semi-annual Himeji PEPY bike ride, visiting local sites and admiring the autumnal colours all whilst raising money for PEPY in Cambodia. However, as is the way with fundraising, we always appreciate more help as we work towards our financial goal of \$2400 USD that we will donate to the organization alongside our own tour.

Seldom does one get to fundraise, donate, and then go and see first hand how their contributions are used to help the chosen cause. This PEPY Bicycle Tour, as well as the generosity of others in helping donate, allows exactly that.

Please help us achieve our goal to contribute and experience the work of PEPY in Cambodia.

Simon Shone

Here is the link to the donation site.



Sukiyaki

A traditional, delicious, one pot meal to keep you warm this autumn!

Ingredients (serves 3-4)

- ◎ 600grams thinly sliced beef (gyuniku usugiriniku)
- ◎ 1 bunch chrysanthemum leaves (syungiku)
- ◎ 1 pack of enoki mushrooms (thin, long, white mushrooms)
- ◎ 1 pack of shitake mushrooms (medium, round, brown mushrooms)
- ◎ 1 onion
- ◎ 2-3 leeks (shironegi)
- ◎ 1 carrot
- ◎ 2 packets of udon noodles
- ◎ 1 packet grilled tofu (yakidofu)
- ◎ eggs – one per person

Seasoning

- ◎ 1 cup soy sauce
- ◎ 1¼ cups sake (cooking sake or any drinking sake)
- ◎ ½ cup mirin (sweet cooking sake)
- ◎ 3-5 tablespoons sugar

Step One

Remove the stems/roots of the mushrooms.

Step Two

Remove the roots of the chrysanthemum leaves and cut the bunch in half.

Step Three

Cut the onion in half then cut into thick slices.

Step Four

Cut the leek in pieces 4cm long.

Step Five

Cut the tofu into about eight square pieces.

Step Six

Stir fry the beef with a little oil in a large pot – a sukiyaki pot is usually an iron pot with handles.

Step Seven

Add sugar, sake, mirin and soy sauce to the beef.

Step Eight

Add onion, leek, carrot and tofu, boil over a medium flame.

Step Nine

Once the vegetables are almost cooked then add the chrysanthemum leaves, mushrooms and noodles. Cook for about another 5-10 minutes.

Step Ten

Beat each egg in a small individual bowls.

Step Eleven

If possible serve sukiyaki in the pot over a flame at the table. You should eat straight from the pot and dip each vegetable or piece of beef in the raw egg before eating. Enjoy with rice.

Lauren McRae

Engrish corner



Got Engrish that deserves to be shared? Send it to Hyogo Times and it might be featured in the next issue!

“Let’s merry!”

Participate!

Hyogo Times is currently looking for writers to contribute to the following sections:

- | | | |
|---|---|---------------------------------|
| ◎ Hyogo Restaurant Critic | ◎ Media Reviewer (Movies/Books/Music/anything else) | ◎ Tajima regional correspondent |
| ◎ Web Design Manager | ◎ Settsu regional correspondent | ◎ Awaji regional correspondent |
| ◎ English Sensei Spirit (column writer) | ◎ Harima regional correspondent | ◎ Culture (column writer) |
| ◎ Illustrator | | |
| ◎ Current Events (column writer) | | |

Contact us today at publications@hyogo.ajet.net

The 4Ps!

So, one of my girl-friends is one of those fabulous, educated chicks who lovesssssssss men! (don't we all... well...). And, in addition to coordinating her wardrobe, being the chief adviser on hair, make-up, and boyfriend issues, I have pledged to help her study for her exams.

During one of our study sessions, she was rambling on and on about some sort of marketing mix or whatever, and something about 4-Ps. But during her rambling (and me trying to figure it out) she was making an analogy about a product of some sort and how to use this 'marketing mix' to get the product sold. So, being the fabulously attentive guy that I am, I asked her to explain to me what the hell this marketing mix is! Well, she said, (quiet eloquently too... You go girl!!!) "the marketing mix refers to the PRODUCT, PRICE, PLACE, and PROMOTION a company uses to sell off a good/service." And then she went on and on about how the PRODUCT is what is being offered to the customer, the PRICE is what the customer is willing to pay for the product, the PLACE is where you get that product, and the PROMOTION is what the company does to get the customers' attention.

So, after chit-chatting with her and studying, it got me thinking of the 4Ps! – If a company has a product that it wants to sell to a customer in order to satisfy a need, and that company can mix the right cocktail of "Ps" in order to attract and retain a customer, why can't we do this? Huh? Why not? After all, Christmas is right around the corner and a good "purchase" would be a Christmas gift I know you could use. So I thought, what are my 4Ps? Do I have a 'P', more so four? Do you? Does everyone? Then I wondered, if someone is really serious about dating and finding that right guy, wouldn't we have to address our 'Ps'. Wouldn't we need to identify what exactly our "product" is? Wouldn't we need to price our "product" and state what will it take for a "customer" to acquire this precious merchandise? Wouldn't we need to apply a pricing strategy? – whether premium pricing, psychological pricing, competitive pricing, or penetration pricing (I just like the sound of this one...lololol). But think about it! Wouldn't we need to determine where is the best location for potential "customers" to find the "products" and maybe take some time to learn about the various qualities and attributes that the "product" has? Wouldn't we need to devise strategies to draw the attention of "customers"? – Whether by personal selling,

direct mail or public relations. Well, I think so! I think this is the answer we have been searching for! The 4Ps!

Needing more clarity on this "Ps" issue, I called back my fag-hag-turned-star-student to ask her to explain in more details what these 'Ps' are about. So, according to her *[I hope you trust her as much as I do]*, the "product" would certainly be us. The "product" would represent what we have to offer to a potential "customer" (boyfriend/ girlfriend/ partner): that is, our personalities, our hearts, our individualisms, our commitment to love and our ability to be loved, our beautiful minds, our fabulous bodies (well, at least yours... mine is a train-wreck), our killer ass and abs (well, I have the ass.. as for the abs.. nope), our passionate kisses and award winning oral skills, among others (if you know what I mean). And we all know that with any good product, the package is important! Presentation! Presentation! Presentation!

Having a fabulous product is one thing. Now we need to determine the market value of that 'product'. So, she said that the "price" tells the "customers" how much they will need to spend in order to acquire the "product". Then, according her [again, do you trust her?] the 'price' is what your

"customer" has to lay on the table to "win the bid of purchase". That is, his heart; his respect for you; his commitment to loving you unconditionally; his 'sex-buddy' or whatever (he has to give this up); and of course his luscious lips, charming smile, ripping abs and eyes that just captivate you and win you over.

So with a "product" on the market and a "price" attached to it, the next 'P' to worry about is the "promotion" (how the hell are you going to get the attention of your 'customers'?). What can you do to attract that fabulous dashing guy you have had your eye on all this time? What chic outfit can you whip up to maximize your assets and minimized your flaws? What signs/messages can you send to the target 'customer' to say, "Hey boo. I like you. I dig you. I am available. Come over here and poke around a little?" So, maybe a direct approach is needed in some cases. Drive or die, BITCH!! Approach the 'customer' directly, either by mail or face-to-face. With this approach you know if the 'customer' is interested within minutes of the first contact. This is a risky move, but with great risks come great rewards! If you are not so brave to pull off a face-to-face encourage, there is always the "PR Department" (close friends, mutual friends, your 'side kick') to work on that 'customer'. A good

"PR Department" is a close friend, fag-hag or mutual friend who goes in for 'the kill' for you and promote the 'product' by selling the good points of the 'products' and try to spark the 'customer's' interests in the 'product'. An effective "PR Department" tries to arrange a one on one 'sampling' of the 'product' via a lunch date, a movie, a lyme, a BBQ invite, cocktails after work, or whatever.

"Place"What do you think this means? No..no.. It's not sleazy motel where you are going to "do it" with the guy! (Well, it can be if you want it to be... lolol)... So, I asked my little star-student what does 'place' mean and after she frantically flipped through her notes she came out with, "where ever the customer has to go to acquire the 'product'." So, this could be anything from a sleazy bar on some back street to dating online. The "places" greatly depend on what city you are in. It could be at a library; a nice chic bar which serves excellent cocktail on coasters; the movies; a trendy gay club in Doyama-cho (Osaka); a chic restaurant in Shinsaibashi (Osaka); a certain Latin club in Himeji; an art gallery; riding the train and starting to chit chat with a cute guy who is sitting beside you; while shopping for that winter sweater to pair with your dynamite-of-a-pant. But where ever the 'place' might be,

it's important that the 'customer' interfaces/interacts with the 'product' and get a good idea of exactly what the 'product' has to offer and if that 'product' is exactly he (the 'customer') needs.

When a 'customer' goes shopping, he goes with the intention of finding a 'product' to satisfy all his specific needs. With the right marketing mix, that precious merchandise could land in the shopping bag of an ideal 'customer'. All it takes is the correct combination of the 4Ps! Do you know your 'Ps'? What are they? Ensure that the next time you place your 'product' on the market for a 'Purchase with no refund option' you pour all your 'Ps' in a cocktail mixer and mix the helllllll out of your Ps until you get the correct combination and pour yourself a cocktail of winning 'Ps'. The 4Ps: my marketing mix(er). A Christmas gift from me (Dwayne) to you. *[PS: By the time this gets published, I should lying on a beach on the Red Sea enjoying the products of my COCKtail.]*

MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Dwayne Copourne



Hyogo Times December Event Calendar

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
27	28	29	30	01 Pageant of Lights and Flowers 2011 Dec 1 – Jan 15, 2012 Awaji, Kiseki no Hoshi Botanica	02 Kobe Luminarie Dec 1 – 12, Kobe Shiso Sale Dec 1 – 20, Yamasaki, Shiso	03 Pageant of Lights and Flowers 2011 Dec 1 – Jan 15, 2012 Awaji, Kiseki no Hoshi Botanica
04 Kobe Luminarie Dec 1 – 12, Kobe Shiso Sale Dec 1 – 20, Yamasaki, Shiso	05	06	07	08 Kobe Luminarie with Hyogo AJET Kobe	09	10 Kobe Luminarie Dec 1 – 12, Kobe Shiso Sale Dec 1 – 20, Yamasaki, Shiso
11 Pageant of Lights and Flowers 2011 Dec 1 – Jan 15, 2012 Awaji, Kiseki no Hoshi Botanica	12	13 The 108th Annual Akogishi (Ako Samurai) Festival Dec 13 – 14 Ako Castle Ruins	14 The 108th Annual Akogishi (Ako Samurai) Festival Dec 13 – 14 Ako Castle Ruins	15 Ako Kotto-ichi Dec 15 Antique market at Oishi Jinja 129 Kamikariya, Ako-shi	16 Christmas Cocktail Party and Silent Auction Fundraiser for PEPY Dec 16 – 17	17 Pageant of Lights and Flowers 2011 Dec 1 – Jan 15, 2012 Awaji, Kiseki no Hoshi Botanica
18 Pageant of Lights and Flowers 2011 Dec 1 – Jan 15, 2012 Awaji, Kiseki no Hoshi Botanica	19	20	21	22	23 Christmas Eve for Earth Yashiro Chuo-koen, Kato City	24 Christmas Eve
25 Christmas Day	26	27	28	29	30	31 New Years Eve

For more indepth details about all the events, please visit our website: www.hyogoajet.net/hyogotimes